

Var Bhagauti Ji

Eke Oankar
Victory be to the Wondrous Lord.
Invocation to Sri Bhaguati
Var Sri Bhagauri Ji Ki
Tenth Master

First and foremost I remember Bhagauti, and then set my mind on Guru Nanak. Then I seek the help of Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das and Guru Raam Das, Arjan, Hargobind and (Guru) Har Rai be remembered. Sri Harkrishan be meditated upon whose mere glimpse removes all sorrows. (Guru) Tegh Bahadur be remembered as it causes the home to flourish. They all help me at all places. ||1||

Pauri

The Lord first created the Khanda, the double edged sword and then this manifest world. Having created Brahama, Vishnu and Shiva, He created the entire play of qudarat (manifest world). He created the oceans, mountains earth and the sky which stands above unsupported by any pillars. He created both gods and demons and then created polemic between them. It was He who created Durga so as to destroy the demons. Rama also took strength from Him to kill the ten-headed Ravana with his arrows. Krishna also got his strength from Him and thus threw down Kansa by his hair. Many great gods and ascetics underwent hard austerities, but none could fathom Him. ||2||

The saintly satiyuga (age of Truth), went by and then came about *treta* (third age) when nobility was practised only in half. Now the clouds of polemic spread above every head because the influence of Narad was pervasive. The Lord created demons like Mahikhasur and Sumbh so as to shatter the ego of the gods. They routed the gods and setup their sovereignty in the three worlds. Then these demons began to call themselves great warriors and they used to enjoy the honour of canopy over their heads. They threw Indara out of his town, Indrapuri, who now began to look towards Kailash mountain with a look of longing. Now Indra arfaid of the demons, was highly stricken with fear and came to Durga (so seek her help)||3||

One Day Durga came for a bath where Indra told her of his plight. Demons have usurped our kingdom and now their proclamations are heard in all the three worlds. Conquering Amarviti they have pushed out the gods. Since none could defeat Mahikhasur we have come to seek your shelter.||4||

Having listened to Indras plight, Durga laughed loudly. She sent for the same lion that devours demons. She assured the gods not to worry. The great mother was full of rage so as to destroy the demons. ||5||

Dohera

The mighty demons came to the battlefield inspired to have a fight. Swords and spears shone so brightly that the sun was not visible. ||6||

Pauri

Both the armies stood facing each other, and drums were being beaten and conch-shells blown. The mighty demons armed with swords and wearing armour stepped forward. The warriors who now plunged into battle were so brave that they knew not of running away. Such warriors roared in the battlefield. ||7||

Clarion-call was given and symbols were beaten loudly. Spears swung, the beautiful banners fluttered. Drums were beaten and their sound seemed like music to the ears of the warriors who swayed like sleepy persons. In this music, both Durga and the demons fought each other. The warriors get pierced by the spears and they look like myrobalans on a branch of a tree. Some are slain by swords and those wounded squirm like intoxicated persons. The cowards are dragged out of the bushes and killed as gold is sifted from sand. Maces, tridents, spears, arrows swing this way and that with full intensity, and they bite like black cobras as a result of which many brave warriors lose their lives. ||8||

The trumpets of demons sounded more loudly to see the frightening Durga. The brave demons encircled her completely. They are holding swords in hand and are fighting valiantly. They are such bold soldiers who never run away from the battlefield. They are full of wrath in hearts cry to kill Durga. Many of these warriors are killed by Durga and their bodies lie in the battlefield like huge minarets razed by lightning. ||9||

Trumpets are being beaten and there are fierce clashes between the two armies. The goddess sways around her lioness-like sword and thrusts it at Mahikhasur who was then rubbing his belly. Her sword pierced into him and came out taking his intestines and liver. The sword pierced through his body and came out of the other side like a rising meteor. I have said this with the help of a smile as it occurred to me. ||10||

Drums are being continuously beaten and armies confront each other. Both the gods and the demons have taken out their swords and taken positions to

practice them. Blood flows from their bodies as the colour flows from the cloth. The female of the demons look at this clash sitting in lofty attics. Durga's courage has caused confusion among the demons.||11||

Many drums were beaten on both sides, but the demons did not give up the (battle) field. All the warriors roar like lions. The demons stretch their bows full to shoot arrows at Durga. ||12||

The drums tied on the backs of camels and horses were beaten in the field. Chief demons, their bodies besmeared with dust, dark skinned, matted hair, nostrils as wide as alcoves and heavy moustaches moved upfront before the goddess. Gods like Indra had already fought against them but could not subdue these brave demons. Encircling Durga they roared like dark clouds.||13||

Drums were being beaten. There was a fierce contest between the two armies. The brave demons were able to put up a siege around Durga. The demons were rather bold, and they knew not of running away from the (battle) field. They sacrificed their lives at the hands of the gods in the battlefield and thus went to heaven. ||14||

Innumerable drums were sounded as the opponent armies clashed against each other. The gods and demons fought like two crazy oxen. The demons, full of anger, caused heavy casualties. The swords taken out of their sheaths looked like saws. The huge bodies of warriors in the battlefield looked like minarets. The goddess herself laid to ground the mountain-sized demons. They never accepted defeat and rushed forward. However Durga slayed all the demons with her sword.||15||

Pauri

As the clarion-call came the warriors entered the battlefield with renewed vigour. Mahikhasur roared in the battlefield like clouds "The warrior like Indra suffered defeat at my hands, what to me is poor Durga who has waged this war?"||16||

Drums were repeatedly sounded and the clash continued between the opposing hords. The arrows shot like mediators in between the two forces. Innumerable warriors lost their lives as these arrows struck them. They fell as columns are felled by lightening. The bodies with loose hair of demons lay unattached in the field as if ascetics with matted hair lay under the intoxication of hemp.||17||

Both the armies clashed as the drums were sounded. A very proud leader of the demons (Mahikhasur) attacked Durga. He was accompanied and supported by several brave chiefs. Mahikhasur took a heavy khunda or double edged sword of of his sheath. Warriors rushed forward with enthusiasm and there was fierce fighting. Blood flowed as water flows from the matted hair of Shiva.||18||

Drums mounted on camels were sounded and the fighting went on. Durga also pulled he sword out of its sheath. Durga made a very heavy blow of the sword which struck the skull (of Mahikhasur) and broke into small pieces, it reached the mouth and finally sawed the body. Then it went through the rug on horse back and the horses body and hit the earth. Having pierced the ground it hit the horn of the (mythological) bull supporting the earth and then having killed the enemy touched the body of the tortoise beneath it. Dead bodies lay there like trunks of trees felled by carpenters. The battlefield seemed to have become a dough of blood and flesh. This story of sword (used with such valour) will be remembered throughout the four aeons. Thus was spent the difficult and painful moment of the life of Mahikhasur.||19||

Having killed Mahikhasur the empress of the fourteen realms, Durga, made her lion dance about. She killed many brave leading demons. Many proud demons could not even ask for water. They lay on the field as if some Pathans acquired a state of bliss after listening to music. In the battlefield blood flowed like flood water. The injured warriors moved as if some teetotaller had taken huge quantities of five quality liquor.||20||

Pauri

After restoring the kingdom to the gods, Durga disappeared from the scene. Now warriors like Sumbh and Nisumbh, who seemed to have been born out of pride, sat together to discuss the blessing given by Shiva for their victory. Ever since Shiva gave them a blessing, they had an eye on usurping Indra's capital.||21||

The great warriors now resolved to invade Indrapuri. They put on armours, wore iron-net masks, put armour on horses and camels and thus collected their war materials. A huge army of one akshauhani (comprising of 21870 elephants, equal numbers of chariots, 65610 horses and 109350 soldiers foot) now set out. As they marched the dust raised by them covered the entire sky. Beholding all this Sumbh and Nisumbh were further seething with rage.||22||

Sumbh and Nisumbh desired that war drums be sounded. Rage seemed personified here. The warriors were making their steeds run about. Drums were beaten on both sides. The sound seemed to be of male buffalo, the carriage of the god of death. Both the gods and demons had come prepared for a fight.||23||

Clash between the gods and demons continued uninterrupted. The blood stained uniforms of the soldiers looked like flowers bloomed in a garden. The evil spirits, kites and crows fed them selves on the dead bodies. The scene was

completely chaotic and noisy. The brave soldiers were raising loud war noises. ||24||

Both the gods and demons sounded the war drums. The demons ultimately routed the gods who fled from the field. The demons sway now ran in the three worlds. The frightened gods again sought protection from Durga. They succeeded in persuading her to attack the demons. ||25||

Pauri

Durga again came to the rescue of the gods when the news reached her. In the other camp many proud demons also got together. The demon-king Sumbh sent for a chieftain Dhumarlochan by name and with a smoke like complexion. He considered himself very great. The war drum was sounded and the slogan was to bring Durga as captured. ||26||

When Durga saw the enemy forces, she thundered. She pulled the khunda, double edged sword out of the sheath and moved upfront before the enemy. All the brave soldiers of Dhumar got killed. Their dead bodies lay scattered in the field as a labourer might have felled many trees. ||27||

The drum beaters again sounded the drums and a fierce clash ensued between the two sides. Then Durga in a rage appeared before the demons. In her left hand was the khunda. She struck the weapon on many a soldier which turned it red with blood. The demon soldiers were so confused that they killed their own companions mistaking them for Durga. Now the goddess Durga seething with rage made blow for the chiefs and with this single blow Dhumarlochan was despatched to the other world. It seemed as if Dhumarlochans death was an advance-money paid for the death of Sumbh. ||28||

The crushed demons now cried before their king, sumbh “Dhumarlochan has been killed along with his soldiers.” She targeted select warriors in the battlefield and killed them. The falling soldiers looked like falling stars in the sky. Their dead bodies lay like mountains struck by lightening. The demons got frightened and got routed. Many were killed and those who were able to save their lives stood around the king. ||29||

Pauri

Boiling with rage the demon-king summoned his demons. They sat together and resolved that they must bring Durga as captive. Chand and Mund came to the battlefield with huge armies. The hordes wearing armour looked like rising dark clouds. The swords dangling down their waists they marched towards the field. It seemed as if they were being led the the god of Death for slaughter. ||30||

Drums and large kettle-drums were sounded and the clash ensued between the two armies. The warriors were seething with rage and they invaded the demons. They made their steeds run about and held spears in their hands. The trident and swords swung around in the air. Many enemies were killed in the battlefield. The arrows shot by the gods rained on the demon-armies. ||31||

The tambourine was beaten and conch blowed and a fierce clash took place. Durga took up a bow and stretched it full strength to shoot arrows at the enemy. Many soldiers were sent by Chand and Mund to Sumbh to give news of

the battle front. Those who dared raise their weapons could not save their lives. Both Durga and the gods killed Chand and Mund in this battle.||32||

Pauri

Sumbh and Nisumbh got enraged on listening to the news of the death of their comrades. He convened a meeting and invited all warriors to it. The demon-warriors who had earlier routed the gods like Indra were now easily killed by the gods. They rubbed their hands in sorrow remembering their dead friends. Then receiving an order from the demon king Sumbh Shronatbij put betel leaves in his mouth. His soldiers now put on armour, tied belts on their waists and wore iron helmets. They swung their swords which seemed to have been like a roof over their heads. The brave demons roared and got ready to fight. These were the soldiers who never retreated once they entered the field. They are all great warriors : now it is to be seen how ferocious the battle might become.||33||

Soldiers of the demon army now reached near Durga and made a loud roar. Listening to this noise Durga also mounted her lion. She swung a sword in her hand and mace in another. Thus, she killed a major part of Shronatbij's army. The warriors wondered in the field like intoxicated jugglers. Some warriors lay on the ground with their feet wide apart like those young men who having played Hoil (an Indian festival of colours) feel tired and go to sleep.||34||

Now Shronatbij summoned the remaining soldiers. These soldiers were so tall and healthy that they looked like minarets in the field. All of them raised their arms and made cries of "kill ! kill !" they marched upfront before the enemy. As the swords struck the armour they produced a lot of noise. This noise was like the one created by the brass-maker while making and shaping brass utensils.||35||

Drums were sounded and the clash between the two forces ensued. The soldiers swung around like dead leaves in a whirlwind. They fell from their horses along with their saddles. The injured warriors would get up and ask for water. The demons were so badly mauled as if lightening from the side of the gods had struck them.||36||

The fierce clash ensued which further escalated the sound of the drums. In a matter of moments the entire army of demons was wiped out. Durga then raised the lioness-like sword in her left hand. She, seething with rage killing the demons struck her sword at the head of Shronatbij.||37||

Innumerable huge bodied demons were blood stained. They looked like tall minarets in the battlefield. They challenged Durga and came in front of her. All demons who dared come in front of her were slain. Blood flowed from their bodies as rain water gushes from pipes from roof tops. As the blood fell on the ground many more demon warriors sprouted from it laughing. ||38||

Drum beaters gave a clarion call for war. The spear with tassel put many a warrior to death. There was a fierce warrior-like contest between Durga and the demons. On the battlefield there was a lot of crying and killing. It seemed as if the acrobats had begun to dance to the tune of the war drums. Daggers

pierced into the bodies lying down in the field looking like fish caught in the net. The swords shone as does lightening in the dark clouds. The swinging swords had so covered the sky it was as if it were a foggy winters day.||39||

The drumsticks sounded the drums and clash ensued between the armies. The young and bold warriors took their swords out of their sheaths. Shronatbij caused the birth of many demons like him. All these came to Durga seething with rage. All of them struck swords at Durga who saved herself by taking these attacks on her shield. The goddess also struck swords at demons as she saw them and her unsheathed swords seemed to have bathed in blood as the goddesses go and have a bath in the Sarsvati river. All of these forms which grew out of Shronat's blood that fell to the ground were killed in action. However, soon many more were sprouted from his blood.||40||

The warriors started the battle with the beating of drums. The goddess meditated on the Timeless Lord, but had only wrath in her mind. Out of Durgas head came the power of the Timeless Lord as if it was symbolic of victory. Immediately after birth from the forehead she set out for the battlefield. She created an uproar in the field just as a lion does when it walks about and roars in the jungle. (There was so much killing in the battlefield that) it seemed that the wearer of the trident, Shiva, having become annoyed with all the three worlds had come to destroy them; as if Vishnu had become annoyed and he had taken up his special sword called Naidag. As Durga attacked the demons the latter fell upon her swinging swords and raining arrows. She made a thrust into the camp of the demons and pushed them back. She got hold of many by their hair and threw them. Thus, she raised a tumult in the enemy ranks. The goddess was seething with rage and she rotated many a well known warriors above her head and threw them away.||41||

Both the armies faced each other and ordered their ranks. They pulled out their swords and washed them with blood (of the enemy). Many soldiers and swords surrounded Shrinatjib. It seemed as if many bridesmaids were surrounding a bridegroom to have a glimpse of him.||42||

As the armies clashed with each other the drums were continuously beaten. They took out the sharp swords in their hands. These swords habitual of taking flesh struck the warriors. These were the nights of suffering for both men and horses. Companion friends of Durga came to the field in the form of kites crying "we have to drink blood." (In this way the goddess) killed the entire army of demons. The fleeing soldiers (who could save themselves) told the story to king Sumbh as to how blood drops (from the goddess and her companion-friend) . All those forms who had sprouted from the blood of Shronitjib were killed in the battlefield. Thus the moment of death came to so many. The brave warriors fought valiantly and laid their lives as if their mothers had not given birth to them.||43||

Now begins the fight of Nisumbh.

Sumbh heard the wailing of Shronatbij. When Durga entered the battlefield none could face her. Many matted hair warriors boasted that they will set out

for the battlefield with the beating drum. When the armies moved up front the earth seemed to tremble as does a boat in a vast river. As the horses moved the dust caused by their hooves seemed as if the earth moved up to Indra kaing along her petition. ||44||

The brave men found a new opportunity for themselves and the formed an army of warriors. They went upfront before Durga empress as the hajis go to Ka'aba at Mecca. They shot arrows and used swords and daggers on each side of the field to invite the warriors. The injured soldiers swirl around as engrossed in public weal does qazi, in a mosque. Some injured by spears sit like one saying namaz, the muslim prayer. Some feel irritated (at their helplessness) before Durga and rebuke their horses. They run like hungry leopards (after prey) before the goddess. These were the warriors who never felt satisfied with combats but now they had it to their fill. ||45||

Drums tied on horseback and other kind were beaten. The demons with heavy matted hair on their heads form regular groups and enter the battlefield back to back. They had tasselled spears and they look like a group of rishies going to the Ganga to have a bath. ||46||

Both the armies led by Durga and the demons moved forward to face each other and they prick each other like thorns. The warriors have covered the entire field with raining arrows. They have taken out their sharp swords with which the warriors are cut to pieces. As soon as the armies approached each other there was a fierce clash. ||47||

Both the armies were face to face and the brave had started invasions. They had taken with creaking sounds their sharp edged swords out of their sheaths. They cried and fighting ensued between the great proud ones. The heads, arms and headless trunks lay in the field like plucked flowers in a garden. The bodies lay like the sandal tree felled in the forest by a saw. ||48||

When the drums were sounded both armies clashed fiercely with each other. Now Durga picked out selected targets from among the enemy camp whom she made targets of her arrows. She killed many on elephants, in chariots and on foot. The blood stained red tips of arrows stench in the armour of the dead looked like blossoms on the pomegranate plant. Durga was in rage and she took her sword in her right hand and moved ahead. She killed several thousands of brave demons like Hiranyakshipu. She alone was overpowering the army force. May Akal Purkh ever bless her blows. ||49||

Again the drums were sounded and both the armies clashed against each other. Then Nisumbh put armour on his steed and made it dance around on the field. He sent for a huge bow on special request from the king of Multan. Durga on her part moved forward in the field to fill the entire battlefield with blood and flesh. Durga took a step forward and made a blow of her sword at Nisumbh. The blow was so strong that the sword sawed Nisumbh's body, cut through the armour of the horse, slayed the horse into two and touched the earth. The brave Nisumbh fell down from his horse bowing to Durga. (Impressed by the bravery and prowess of Nisumbh, the poet appreciates him saying) "Worth appreciation is he and worth appreciation is his prowess; the

fearless was he chews betel-leaf also deserves appreciation. Equally worth appreciation is the way he faced the arrows and the way he made his steed move swiftly.” ||50||

Durga and the demons fought a fierce battle. The great warriors came ahead to face each other. The swords and arrows churned the forces. Angels from heaven came down to have a look at the fierce battle.||51||

As the drums were beaten both sides took to the field with added vigour. The brave warriors entered the field. They held swords and spears which they now raised up. They wore helmets, armour and such other protective gear. Durga took a spear in her hand and killed many demons. Many elephant riders, horsemen and foot men among the demons were felled to earth. She was sitting just as the confectioner picks up fried lumps of mashed pulses with a skewer.||52||

Both the armies faced each other with the sounding of the drums. Now empress Durga took out her fire-emitting sword and made a blow at Sumbh so that it could drink his blood. The sword, like a beloved, touched his heart and Sumbh fell from his steed. When the sword was pulled out of his body it was so drenched with blood as a princess dressed in scarlet robes comes out of the palace.||53||

A fierce battle place between Durga and the demons. Durga held different weapons in her hands. She succeeded in killing the brave like Sumbh and Nisumbh. The armies of the demons wailed and wept loudly on seeing this. The demons accepted defeat and in acknowledgement of this they held a twig of grass under their teeth and fled away leaving behind their horses. They were killed as they fled but they dared not look behind.||54||

Sumbh and Nisumbh were thus despatched to the land of the death-god. Indra was sent for so as to be installed again as the king. Thus once again a royal umbrella was held above Indras head and the praise of the mother-world (Durga) spread in all fourteen realms. This narrative of Durgas exploits has been composed only in stanzas. He who recites it is free for ever from the process of transmigration.||55||